



Spoon River News

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President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

As a member of Spoon River Electric Cooperative, you are also an owner. For 75 years, our Cooperative has served its members with power that is safe, reliable and affordable. Back when the Co-op was founded, it cost more to bring lines to rural areas than more densely populated ones. But Co-ops weren't built on a model of making money. Even today, it still costs more to maintain our lines, which stretch over many miles of road to often serve a handful of members, than it costs investor-owned utilities to maintain theirs. But we benefit from not having to provide profits for shareholders as they do.

As your Board of Directors makes decisions to guide our Cooperative into the future, they are committed to four core principles:

Innovation: From our automated meter reading system to the global-positioning-system devices that help choose the most efficient routes for our service trucks, technology helps our employees every day. Our technology exceeds what many investor-owned utilities have. That benefits you as a member because it allows us to accomplish the same work we always have with fewer employees. It also allows us to keep a close eye on service problems, and find and fix them quickly when they arise.

Accountability: Your Board of Directors is made up of nine members, each from a different district in our territory. The Cooperative

stays accountable to the membership through this structure, and also through our Annual Meeting of Members. At the Annual Meeting, you can find out where your money is being spent and how we are planning for the future.

Integrity: Our employees are here to serve the membership. And they do it with courtesy, honesty and diligence. You are not just a number here, but a member whose name and face we probably know. We work with members who are struggling to pay bills and respond immediately to service problems.

Commitment to Community: We provide scholarships to high school students, support local organizations and assist our neighbors. If you're at the county fair, you may see our directors bidding at auctions for livestock raised by our members' children. You may see the county fair queen get awarded a trophy that we sponsored. Or you may see our linemen helping maintain the electrical system at the fair so it stays safe and reliable. These are examples of the things we do as a Cooperative because we are focused on our members, not profits. Any money we bring in that exceeds the cost of our operation is returned to you in the form of Capital Credits.

As always, if you have questions about how our Cooperative works, you can reach me at the office at (309) 647-2700.

At Spoon River Electric Cooperative, we get our strength from a family of over 730 cooperatives—who all work together. And together, we have strength. We have a greater ability to provide a reliable source of electricity. We also have greater purchasing power, which enables us to keep costs in check. Together, we'll always be looking out for you, your family and your community.





Shorter showers = more savings for you

You can save money and help the environment by being just a little quicker with your daily shower. According to an article in the *Christian Science Monitor*, a typical shower head can produce two gallons of water per minute. In a 12-minute shower, you're using 24 gallons, which adds up to over 8,700 gallons yearly.

Cutting your shower time down to four minutes can save you anywhere from \$10 to \$100 per year, depending on your local water rates. It'll also save on utility costs associated with heating the water for your shower.

So try to get in and out quicker, and you'll do yourself and the world a favor in the long run.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340, Canton, IL 61520
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
309-647-2700 • www.srecoop.org

President/CEO

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Editor of Spoon River News

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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,249 • Number of members served: 4,944
Number of power poles in territory: 29,255

Plan for an emergency

It's not pleasant to think about worst-case scenarios. But a little planning can make a difference if the worst does happen. Follow these tips to avoid feeling helpless during a disaster.

BEFORE:

- **Communicate.** Talk with your family about who to call, where to go, and what to do if disaster strikes.
- **Educate.** Plan different strategies on what to do for different situations. Map out a fire escape route from all areas of your home, and establish a safe place to go during threatening weather. Make sure all family members know their full names, address, and phone numbers. Agree on an out-of-town relative or friend to call if everyone gets separated during a disaster, and have an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact in your cell phone that first responders can call if needed.



- **Prepare.** Set up warning systems in your home—fire detectors and carbon monoxide alarms give advance notice that can save lives. Use a battery-operated weather radio for advance storm warnings, and subscribe to your local Office of Emergency Management alerts by text or e-mail if available. Keep an emergency kit handy that contains five days worth of non-perishable food and water, first aid supplies, a list of phone numbers (including your electric co-op and other utilities' outage numbers), medicines, and cleaning supplies. Also, plan for pets or any special needs for family members. Then practice your emergency plans.

DURING:

- **Keep calm:** Think clearly and follow your plan. Use the resources you prepared in case of emergencies.
- **Emergency phone:** Keep a

corded landline phone handy in case of emergency. If cell phone batteries die, there's no way to charge them during a power outage. A landline phone will still work without electricity and become your link to the outside world.

AFTER:

- **Be patient:** Wait for all danger to pass. Never re-enter an evacuated area without permission to do so, and remember to use caution when you do go back into your home—you can't always see danger, such as a ruptured gas line.
- **Avoid delayed danger:** Do not approach downed wires or power lines, and watch for rising waters. Keep standby generators in well-ventilated areas—never run a generator indoors, even in a garage.

With a little planning, the worst can be avoided during disasters. Visit redcross.org or ready.gov for more disaster planning ideas. Taking the time to be prepared is worth the effort now in case of emergency later.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Two degrees can make a big difference on your electric bill. Setting your thermostat 2 degrees Fahrenheit higher in summer and lower in the winter results in major energy savings. Investing in a programmable thermostat can save even more—these devices automatically lower and raise your home's temperature. Set it and forget it! Find more ways to save at TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

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Spoon River Electric Cooperative
Attn: Billing
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